

I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl That Married Dear Old Dad

The portrait hole opened and four students climbed through, while engaging in a boisterous discussion. Lavender and Parvati were smiling at the two boys while Seamus was shaking his head in disbelief.

"No way! I don't believe it."

"Yep, it's true. Of all the girls I know it would have to be Angelina," Dean contended as the four of them made their way toward the fireplace where Harry, Ron, and Hermione were sitting.

"But you never showed any interest in her at all while she was here," Seamus argued.

"She was two years ahead of me. I never got up the nerve," Dean shrugged. "Plus, she was with Fred and I sure didn't want to get on his bad side."

"What are you guys going on about?" Ron asked.

"Lavender told us about this article she read in Witch Weekly," Parvati explained. "It says that guys tend to marry girls who are like their mothers. So Dean's been telling us that Angelina Johnson is the girl who is most like his mother."

"It's true," Dean insisted. "She's strong, and self-reliant, and never backed down from a challenge. And she looks a bit like her, too, or at least what Mum looked like when she was younger."

Harry and Ron shared a thoughtful look while Hermione straightened up her books and put them away. "That makes sense," Harry allowed as his classmates pulled up some more chairs and joined them.

"So, I wonder who's most like my mum," Ron mused.

Lavender and Parvati quickly put their heads together. After a bit of whispering they nodded to each other. "Susan Bones," Lavender announced while Parvati giggled.

Harry grinned as Ron's ears turned red. The buxom strawberry blonde Hufflepuff was somewhat of the mothering type, and bore a certain physical resemblance to Molly Weasley as well.

The discussion had drawn the attention of some of the other students in the common room, among them Ginny, who generally hung around near the trio.

"What about Hermione?" she suggested, inserting herself into the conversation. Both Ron and Hermione blushed slightly and avoided looking at each other, while Harry snorted and shook his head.

"It's hard for me to imagine anyone less like Mrs. Weasley than Hermione," he declared. "For one thing, they don't look anything alike. But more importantly, I can't see Hermione being satisfied to sit at home popping out one kid after another. Not that there's anything wrong with that for your mum," he added hastily as Ron scowled at him, "because cooking, taking care of the house, and being a mum is what she loves doing. But that's not Hermione. She'll want to have a career of her own. Although I think she'll make a great mother someday," he added, shooting Hermione a grin. She answered with a grateful nod and a smile of her own.

"How do you know what she'd want?" Ron demanded, a bit put out.

"Well, we've talked a bit about what we want to do after we graduate," Harry acknowledged with a casual shrug. "But come on, Ron, you've known her for more than six years now. She's going to ace her NEWTs and have her choice of job offers. Anybody in this room could tell you that." He gestured to the group of students that had gathered around them, eliciting a wave of nods. "And she'll be brilliant at whatever she does." This earned him a playful punch on the arm in protest from his embarrassed female best friend, but it was accompanied by an even broader smile.

Ron's annoyance only increased, and looking to move the focus off of Hermione's career choices, blurted out, "Well, what about Harry? What sort of woman would he marry? His mum ..."

Before he could begin to speculate on Lily (Evans) Potter's characteristics Hermione interrupted. "That's not really applicable." Every head in the room turned toward her in curiosity. "The reason a man will marry a woman like his mother is that his mother and father

model for him what a marriage should be," she explained. "Since Harry never knew his mother and father, he wouldn't have known what they were like together, and form an ideal of marriage in his mind, and what qualities he'd like to have in a wife. It would be similar for Neville." Hermione shot a sympathetic glance at her other good friend who nodded soberly in response.

"But Potters always marry redheads," Ron insisted. Behind him Parvati nudged Lavender and motioned toward Ginny, who had reacted to Ron's statement by flipping her long red hair back over her shoulder rather dramatically, and the pair fought to stifle their snickers.

"Oh honestly Ron, are you really saying that there's some genetic predisposition that would cause a man to be attracted to a specific hair color?" Hermione scoffed. "That's ridiculous."

"A what?" Ron asked uncomprehendingly.

"A ... oh never mind," Hermione sighed, rolling her eyes at Harry, who grinned. "Besides, what makes you say that?"

"Harry's mum had red hair," Ron responded. "Everyone knows that."

"So, you're extrapolating from one data point?" Hermione challenged.

"Huh?" Ron continued with his less than eloquent responses.

Hermione groaned, then closed her eyes for a moment and took a deep breath. She opened them again and turned to Harry who was following the exchange with growing amusement. "Harry, what color hair did your grandmother have?"

"I have no idea," he admitted

"Well, she would have had red hair," Ron stated as though it was obvious.

"And you know that because ... ?" Hermione persisted.

"Because Potters always marry redheads," came the predictable reply. Hermione gritted her teeth and forced herself to refrain from hexing him. She also decided that it would probably do no good to

try to explain circular reasoning to him. Seeing Harry chortling next to her she shot him a dirty look and decided to try a different tactic.

"So, Harry, do you feel any sort of compulsion to find any particular color of hair more attractive than another?" she inquired a bit testily.

Not wanting to divert any of her ire from Ron to himself, Harry decided to take her question seriously. "Not that I've noticed," he responded after some thought. "Cho's hair was black, of course, and I thought it looked nice but it wasn't really because of her hair color that I was attracted to her."

Hermione folded her arms across her chest and shot a smug look at Ron, but Harry continued. "In her case it was because she was pretty and played quidditch."

This, in turn, caused Ginny to perk up considerably, and Ron saw an opportunity to redirect the conversation and climb out of the hole he seemed to have dug himself into. "So, that's what you'd say you were looking for in a girl then?" he suggested.

"Are you kidding?" Harry asked incredulously. "You do remember how that relationship turned out, right? Sure, maybe for a date or two but we're talking about marriage here. Once Cho and I got past quidditch we couldn't find a thing to talk about. I'd want someone I could talk to, who I could be completely comfortable sharing my feelings with. That's more important than anything else. And that's certainly not going to happen when either of us is too tongue-tied to even be able to think of something to say."

The reaction to this statement among the rest of the students varied considerably. Many of them nodded thoughtfully, but Hermione suddenly went very still. Parvati and Lavender were grinning broadly, while Ron was scowling again and Ginny looked like she was going to be sick. For her part, she was certain that Harry was referring to her behavior in his presence during her younger years.

There was a silence while everyone digested this declaration, which made Harry somewhat uncomfortable, as he'd never liked being in the spotlight like this. But during this time something that had bothered him earlier in the conversation reasserted itself in his mind.

"Erm, Hermione?" Harry began uneasily. "What you were saying before about seeing a model of what marriage is like while you're growing up. Are you saying I'd want a woman like Aunt Petunia?" The look on his face as he finished this unpleasant query reflected the horror he felt at the slightest possibility that this might be true.

This broke Hermione out of her temporary trance and she smiled at him while patting his hand comfortingly. "No, no, of course not," she reassured him. "It would have to be a relationship that you admired. I don't think there's any danger of that with your aunt and uncle." Harry's loud sigh of relief generated some amused chuckles among those of his fellow students who were aware of his home life.

Ginny didn't like where things were going with this conversation at all. "Well, then you could consider those traits about Harry's mother that he knows about and does admire," she suggested in order to get the focus back on Lily (whom everyone said she resembled).

There was a general murmur of agreement, and the group turned to Harry again. Only a few noticed that Hermione had not let go of his hand, and that he seemed to be perfectly fine with that. "Ah ... OK," he agreed reluctantly. "Well, for one thing everyone says how brilliant she was, tops in all her classes. She was a prefect, and head girl, so I assume she must have been pretty responsible. And she was muggleborn of course. So she had to fight against that prejudice too." Hearing him offer these as the first, and presumably most important characteristics, Dean, Seamus, Lavender and Parvati exchanged knowing glances.

Ron heard the same thing and didn't like the implications at all. "But she was also really pretty, and you know how everyone's always going on about how much your dad was taken with the way she looked, with that long red hair and all," he blurted out. (In fact, it was mostly his mother who was always going on about that, but Ron managed to conveniently overlook that little detail.)

Harry shrugged. "I suppose. I doubt if that was the most important reason he married her though." Ginny's shoulders drooped noticeably.

Ron wasn't giving up yet. "Anything else you've heard about her?"

Harry cocked his head and thought some more, then nodded as he recalled another conversation. "Slughorn talked about how spirited she was. Called her cheeky – said she was always bantering with him."

Ron grinned broadly in triumph. "Well, that sounds just like Ginny. Especially along with all that other stuff. (The 'other stuff', in his mind, referring to the red hair and pretty part.) This caused Ginny to smile and blush fetchingly as everyone turned to look at her.

Unfortunately Dean immediately broke in and ruined her moment in the spotlight. "That sounds like Hermione too," the tall black boy claimed.

Ron scoffed at this idea. "Come on, when has Hermione ever talked back to a teacher?" he challenged.

Dean had a simple answer. "Umbridge." The rest of the students, who had been wondering the same thing, quickly recalled the incident being referred to and nodded. "When it's something important to her she won't back down from anyone," he asserted with some admiration in his voice. Now it was Hermione's turn to blush. It went without saying just exactly what (or more precisely, who) it was that was important enough to Hermione for her to challenge a teacher.

Harry seemed oblivious to all this byplay, just sitting there deep in thought. Then he looked up and made another observation. "From what I saw in Snape's pensieve that one time, mum wasn't all that outgoing. She'd step in and protest when she saw someone being mistreated, but other than that she'd just as soon sit under a tree reading a book."

Lavender and Parvati had to fight hard to suppress their giggles. This was getting more and more obvious by the minute. Now Seamus spoke up. "So, while your dad was practicing quidditch she'd probably be out in the stands to show her support, but she'd be studying while she sat there," he smirked. Dean and Neville began to chuckle at this comment, and soon other students began joining in. After all, everyone in Gryffindor house was well aware that this was exactly what Hermione did when she went to Harry's quidditch practices.

Neville finally stated the obvious. "Mate, you know that you're describing Hermione almost perfectly, right?"

-xox-XOX-XOX-xox-

I've thought of several possible endings for this story, all of which I like, and I can't decide on one. So here's the twist – multiple choice endings. Pick the one you like best.

-oooOOOooo-

Ending A

"Mate, you know that you're describing Hermione almost perfectly, right?"

Harry's eyes widened. "You're right," he stammered. "Why didn't I ever realize that?" He turned to Hermione and swallowed hard. "Hermione, will you ..."

Hermione didn't even let him finish before she threw her arms around him. "Of course I will you idiot," she cried out, with tears in her eyes. She punctuated this by proceeding to kiss him thoroughly. In his shock, it took Harry a few seconds to respond, but he soon lost himself in the sensation. But after a few seconds he pulled back in confusion.

"Wait, you don't even know what I was going to ask," he pointed out after catching his breath. "I might have been asking you out, I might have been asking you to be my girlfriend, or I might even have been asking you to marry me."

Hermione laughed the most delightful laugh he'd ever heard from her. "It doesn't matter, the answer is still yes." This time he was ready when she kissed him, and gave as good as he got.

The new couple was much too preoccupied to pay any mind, but the applause that filled the common room in response to this decision rivaled that of any Gryffindor quidditch victory. There were only two students present that did not join in, but someone had thoughtfully Stupefied them into silence.

-oooOOOooo-

Ending B

"Mate, you know that you're describing Hermione almost perfectly, right?"

Harry stared at his friend a moment, then nodded. "You're right." He turned back to the startled girl next to him. "Hermione, will you marry me?" Suddenly the room was enveloped in stunned silence.

"Don't you think we should date first?" Hermione asked in a voice that was much calmer than she felt.

Harry seemed to be pondering her question for a few seconds, but then he broke into a wide grin. "OK, will you go out with me?"

His grin was infectious, and Hermione couldn't resist returning it. "Yes, you goofball," she giggled. Then she jumped onto his lap and threw her arms around his neck, and they shared their first kiss as a couple. Totally oblivious to the cheering and shouts of congratulation around them (as well as the two Weasleys who just sat there stunned into silence) they rose and joined hands and left the common room for the first of the many interesting, intimate conversations they would have as a couple.

-oooOOOooo-

Ending C

"Mate, you know that you're describing Hermione almost perfectly, right?"

To Neville's surprise Harry stared at him with no trace of humor in his eyes for several moments, then nodded. "You're right." He turned back to the startled girl next to him. "Hermione, will you marry me?" Suddenly the room was enveloped in stunned silence.

Hermione gasped and threw her hands up to her mouth in shock. As it began to dawn on her from the intense look on his face that he was serious, tears welled up in her eyes.

"Oh Harry!" she stammered. "Wh ... why?" She took a breath to compose herself, then tried again. "Where did this come from? This

was just a few people having some fun. You weren't supposed to take it seriously."

Harry reached out to take both of Hermione's hands in his while he tried to explain his actions. He'd always had a tendency to act impulsively, to go with his gut feeling, and this felt right. He inhaled deeply and looked into her shining eyes, and suddenly it didn't seem that difficult. He just had to speak from his heart.

"It may seem sudden, but it's really something I've come to realize recently. It's simple. You're the one I want to spend the rest of my life with. Nothing else makes any sense. Hearing what everybody said just now just brought it all together."

The beginning of a loud objection from the youngest Weasley was cut short by a nonverbal *Silencio* from an alert Neville. Dean followed suit with Ron while the volatile redhead was still building up to his own eruption. But no one else in the room cared, being more concerned with witnessing the passionate kiss that was taking place on the sofa before the fireplace. Soon Gryffindor's newest couple decided that a more private venue was in order, and exited the common room hand in hand. And amid the cheers of their housemates, Dean, Seamus, Parvati, and Lavender congratulated each other on a job well done.

-oooOOOooo-

Ending D

"Mate, you know that you're describing Hermione almost perfectly, right?"

Harry gazed thoughtfully at his friend a moment, then nodded. "You're right." He turned back to the blushing girl next to him. "Hermione, will you marry me?" Suddenly the room was enveloped in stunned silence.

Hermione's eyes went wide, but the surprise soon morphed into amusement and a smile crept onto her face. "Yes, I believe I will," she announced. As one, the pair rose to their feet and Hermione tugged on Harry's hand, which she had never released. Turning to the gaping students surrounding them she announced, "Excuse us,

we need to go plan our wedding." Hand in hand, the pair crossed the common room and exited to the through the portrait hole.

Once outside the two of them burst out laughing as they scurried down the corridor to an empty classroom. "Harry James Potter, I can't believe you did that!" Hermione gasped as the two of them embraced.

"Well, we agreed we wanted to tell everyone," Harry answered cheekily as he tilted her head up to his own and snuck a kiss. "You have to admit it got everyone's attention. It seemed a good way to spread the word rather quickly."

"Honestly Harry, you're incorrigible," Hermione chided as she punched his shoulder playfully before returning the kiss.

"But you love me anyway, right?" he teased. Her nonverbal response left no doubt that her answer was in the affirmative.

Once she'd caught her breath Hermione rested her head on his chest while their arms held each other tight. "I suppose this way was as good as any," she acknowledged with a smile. "I'll admit I have been fretting over how to let everyone know about us now that Voldemort's gone and it's safe. I wonder what made those four bring that topic up today?"

Back in the common room, bedlam had erupted as soon as the most famous witch and wizard of their generation disappeared through the portrait hole. Neville kept a discreet watch on the two Weasleys just in case any trouble developed, but they seemed unable to move at the moment, still sitting by the fire in shock. Dean and Seamus slapped each other on the back in their mirth, while Parvati beamed at them and Lavender wore a triumphant smirk.

"See! I told you!" she boasted once she had their attention. "I told you they were together! You three wouldn't believe me. But I knew we could force it out of them if we worked at it."

"Well, I wasn't as sure as you were but I was hoping for them," Parvati admitted. "But we all played our roles perfectly, I thought. Thanks guys, for going along with us."

Still laughing, Seamus and Dean assured the two girls that they were happy to help, and the four conspirators headed over to join in the celebration.

-oooOOOooo-

At this point all of the endings converge into a common conclusion. Harry and Hermione engaged in an enjoyable discussion/snogging session. Hermione expressed her appreciation for the nice things Harry said about her, and Harry assured her that he meant every word. She let him know that she thought he was also pretty special. Hermione also began a rant about Ron's complete lack of logical reasoning ability but Harry managed to distract her pretty quickly.

They eventually married and lived happily ever after, with fulfilling careers working at making the magical world a better place, and became wonderful parents to several delightful children, absolutely none of which were named Albus Severus.

-xox-XOX-XOX-xox-

A/N Well, there you have it. Which ending did you like best?

When I first posted this story, I tabulated votes from reviewers, and the results are a landslide – readers prefer Ending D by approximately 20:1 over any of the others, which were all about equal in popularity. But feel free to leave a review with your own choice, and make any other comments on the rest of the story as well.